

Interview: Hudnall, Mary
Comments: Hudnall, Clyde
Year: 2003
Notes: None

PEABOY INSTITUTE LIBRARY: ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

Name(s): Clyde and Mary Hudnall
Date: April 1, 2003
Place: Peabody Institute Library
Interviewer: William Power

Project Series: Veterans History Project

Summary of transcript: Clyde Hudnall was born on February 24, 1918 in Buckner, Missouri. Mary Hudnall was born on December 19, 1919 in Malden, Massachusetts. Clyde and Mary each had four siblings. Clyde's father was a schoolteacher and a farmer and his mother had been a schoolteacher before having children. Mary's mother was active in the Girl Scouts. Her father and brothers were interested in sports because and helped to build a boys' athletic house in Malden. In addition, they ran little fairs and rummage sales to make money for the football equipment mainly.

Clyde and one of his brothers would enlist in the Navy where they transported wounded soldiers and supplies in the Pacific Theatre. Mary Hudnall was appointed to the regular Navy Nurse Corps. Clyde and his brother went to flight school in Olathe, Kansas. After basic training Clyde was transferred to Atlanta, Georgia. From there he was transferred to Roanoke, Virginia where he was trained on how to fly D.C. 3 after completing training Clyde was stationed at Olathe, Kansas where his flight crew was based. That flight crew would be selected to go to the Pacific and he went to Oakland, California. While there he was able to fly a DC 4. Once his additional training was complete was would be stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii.

A friend that was up in Chelsea Navel Hospital asked Mary and to look at the grounds and the hospital, Mary liked the environment and joined up. Mary's first assignment was at a naval hospital in Newport, Rhode Island, which had many rules and regulations, but allowed Mary to learn what it meant to be a nurse in the navy nurse crops. Many of the early soldiers Mary saw has broken bones or needed surgery for appendicitis for example. Mary would then be stationed at Navy Pier, which is on Lake Michigan, in Chicago. The patients at Navy Pier had rheumatic fever patients or officers that required surgery that we received from Great Lakes region. Mary would later be stationed at Alameda, and would later have orders to go to Guam. Guam would become her headquarters and operated out of there. Later, she was serving in the Pacific Theatre she would be stationed in Guam. Other assignments included Iwo Jima and later Okinawa among others.

During their time in the Pacific Clyde would meet many nurses but he never met Mary until later. Clyde and Mary were stationed at Patuxent River, Maryland, which is about fifty-five miles from Washington D.C. in order to go to Washington D.C. one needed permission from their supervisor. Clyde and his friends received permission. They went to breakfast and after breakfast Clyde asked Mary if she like to go into Washington to see Mount Vernon. That was their first date. They would later be married at the Patuxent River in the navy chapel on the base. When Clyde left the Navy he had achieved the rank of commander; Mary achieved the rank of full lieutenant.

After the war Clyde was an instructor at flight school in Jacksonville for awhile. Clyde and Mary then moved to Peabody and Clyde flew for the FAA. Clyde continued to be apart of the navy reserves for twenty-eight years.

Search Terms: Buckner, Missouri; Guam; Honolulu; Hudnall, Clyde & Mary; Iwo Jima; Malden, Massachusetts; Okinawa; Olathe, Kansas; Pacific Theatre; Patuxent River, Maryland; Power, Bill; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Trinidad; United States Navy; United States Navy Nurse corps; World War II

Comments On Interview: Clyde Hudnall offers occasional comments

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Mary Hudnall
Narrator
With Comments by Clyde Hudnall

William Power
Interviewer

April 1, 2003
At Peabody Institute Library
Peabody, Massachusetts

Clyde Hudnall - CH
Mary Hudnall - MH
William Power - WP

WP: Well good morning, Clyde and Mary. We are doing this interview of Clyde and Mary Hudnall of 5 Dale Street, Peabody, MA as part of the Veterans History Project. This is April 1, 2004 at 1 pm and we are located at the Peabody Institute Library, which is at 82 Main Street in Peabody, MA. My name is William Power, I'm chairman of the Peabody Historical Commission. We are fortunate this afternoon to have two subjects to interview and they are Clyde and Mary Hudnall. Welcome. I think we'll start off the first question is when and where you born?

MH: I was born December 19, 1919 in Malden, Massachusetts.

CH: February 24, 1918. Buckner, Missouri.

WP: And what war did you serve in?

MH: I served in World War II.

CH: Just World War II.

WP: That was enough I think. And what branch of the service were you in?

MH: I was in the navy nurse corps.

CH: Navy.

WP: And why did you pick that particular branch? Was there any reason that you chose that?

MH: Well I had a friend that was up in Chelsea Navel Hospital and she asked me to come over and look over their grounds and the hospital, and what I saw I liked.¹ So I decided that was for me.

CH: Mine involves just a little story. My brother and I doing flight instructing at a army contract school and there were two army officers there and we were amused at some of their performance and that terminated after three months and we decided, 'Why not join. We knew we were going to have to sign up soon because of that. Why not join the navy. It couldn't be any worse than this.' [Everyone laughs] Maybe that's not very good publicity.

WP: And you knew how to fly, which was important?

CH: Right.

WP What was the rank that you achieved?

MH: Full lieutenant.

CH: Commander.

WP: What did your dad and mom do when you were growing up in Malden? What was their life like? What did they do?

MH: Well, my mother was very busy with Girl Scouts and raising five of us in the family and my dad was interested in sports because of my brothers and helped to build a boys' athletic house in Malden and they ran little fairs and rummage sales to make money for the football equipment mainly. Later on basketball, etcetera.

¹ Chelsea Naval Hospital was located in Chelsea, Massachusetts. It opened in 1836 and was a three-story building with 100 beds. The hospital remained open until the Boston Naval Yard was decommissioned in 1974 the hospital also closed. The building still stands, but it was converted into condominiums.

CH: My father was a schoolteacher and a farmer and my mother had been a schoolteacher before I came around.

WP: And did you come from a large family? You mentioned that...

MH: Yes, there were five of us and I was the oldest.

CH: There were five of us.

WP: Did any of your immediate family serve in the military and when did they serve?

MH: No, my brother did, my middle brother. He was in Europe and D-Day Invasion and they went in on the gliders and fortunately he was very lucky. And then later on in the Battle of the Bulge, that type of thing. He saw his share of duty.

CH: I didn't really understand the question.

WP: Did any of your siblings serve in the service during the war?

CH: Yes, my older brother was drafted into the army and he was in the engineer corps. The brother between us, he and I joined the navy together. And we had the same duty stations for quite a long while. But we never flew with each other.

WP: And what theaters of the war did you serve in?

CH: Me?

WP: Mary.

MH: Out in the Pacific was my theatre of operation. And of course, in the states after the war was over we did fly up to deliver patient or pick them up or to San Juan, Puerto Rico on down to Trinidad, but the main duty was out of Guam going to Iwo Jima and Okinawa and then back to Honolulu for further treatment

CH: My theatre was the American and Pacific.

WP: And Clyde you've already answered this question pretty much; were you drafted or did you enlist?

MH: I was not drafted. I was appointed to the regular Navy Nurse Corps, and that took a little while. I thought these reservists got in so fast and I thought that might happen to me, but they evidently took a while to find out all about your background for regular navy, they figure you'd be in for at least twenty years. [Laughs]

WP: Tell us a little bit about how you both felt those first days in the service after leaving home and family? Was it exciting, was it sad?

MH: It was a little sad, but not too bad because I was only at Newport, Rhode Island, which was my first duty station and I could hop the bus and train and be home on the weekends, so that made it a little bit nicer, but we were kept so busy with getting uniforms measured and training on the hospital wards because that was different from your regular civilian hospital. Too many rules and regulations. It was a good place to have first duty.

WP: Now that was 1943, that you were there. Were you seeing injured soldiers at that time?

MH: Yes, they were in that particular hospital, they had boys that, or men, or older veterans and also younger boys that had just come into the service. Through a lot of their training they had a lot of broken bones and they needed surgery, appendix, and something of that sort. It was a very varied group that we took care of there.

WP: What were your feelings Clyde? Was it traumatic for you at all?

CH: No it really wasn't. For one reason I had my brother with me and I had been away from home for quite a bit anyway. The things that impressed me -- went to Pensacola and we ate meals with so many people and we lived with so many people that those were the only two things that really impressed me. Of course we had this dress business; dress just right and be neat and all that stuff. We had to keep our rooms neat. I remember getting two or three demerits

once because there was some dust on the back of mirror or something like that [Everyone laughs].

WP: And where did you do your training? You spoke of Rhode Island. Did you start out doing your training there?

MH: Do you mean before the navy?

WP: No, during the navy.

MH: Oh, during the navy. After Newport I went to Chicago to Navy Pier and most of the patients at Navy Pier were rheumatic fever patients that we received from Great Lakes, and also officers that came in from a nearby airfield. They were in for various surgical problems. And we also had boys that came off the ships or were doing training right on the Great Lakes. There was an aircraft carrier on the Great Lakes, I believe, one of them anyway. And those pilots would come in from that carrier from various streams.

WP: And you bypassed flight school I believe, right? You did some training?

CH: Yes, but they put us through a familiarization course, I guess. It was really the primary flight course. [Laughs] My instructor had less time than I did. [Everyone laughs]. But, he was all navy.

WP: Where was your first post after training? Yours was Chicago did you say [Looks at Mary]? After training.

MH: Well, the first one was Newport, then Chicago. That's where I received orders to go to California for air evacuation training, and we were the first group of navy nurses. They took a nurse from each naval district across the country and I just happened to be the one from the Chicago area. We went out to California and the army nurses had been doing some of this air evacuation down in Brazil. They taught us what to do as far as evacuating patients over the water, which seems strange to me, but then the navy took over and we had to learn to tread water for at least ten minutes with your hands tied behind you back and no shirt and to jump off a high diving board. I wasn't quite used to that height of diving board. But it worked

out well. Fortunately we had no accidents in the Pacific that we needed that training for.

WP: That's good. What years did you start that service?

MH: '45.

WP: You were flying the evacuates in and out...

MH: Yes, forty-five.

WP: And you were based then in Guam?

MH: We were based at Alameda, and then our orders were to Guam.² Guam became our headquarters then and we operated out of there.

WP: Clyde where was your first once you finished the refresher course? Where did they ship you off?

CH: Well, my first post really was there and that was Pensacola, Florida and that was in September of 1942 that I went on active duty. While there, they gave us a flight instructor course and I already had a civilian flight instructor rating, but then we went to Olathe, Kansas where there was a primary flight school and I spent a year there in the primary flight school. You want some more?

WP: Sure.

CH: While there, once a year they'd give us a chance to bid on our next duty. My brother and I both noticed that one of the duties available was naval air transport service. We both bid on that and then a short time we were in that organization and that involved more training, of course. We went to the instrument flight school in Atlanta, Georgia and then over to Roanoke, Virginia and got training in the D.C. 3 by airline pilots. From there we went back to Olathe, Kansas where we were based and they were transport at the time. We got checked out and started flying the line. We did that for about a year. We got selected to go

² Would have been stationed at Naval Air Station Alameda, which is located in Alameda, California near Oakland and San Francisco. The base operated from 1927-1997.

to the Pacific. For that we went to Oakland, California. While there we got checked out in the DC 4, in the navy it was the R5D. As soon as we got check out there we went to Honolulu, which was our headquarters and took two line checks then we were flying the line as captains, you might say. Incidentally, we were both in the same outfit. She was in the naval air transport and I was at the headquarters base in Honolulu and she was at a detachment in Guam.

WP: And that worked out well for you later on. You pretty much told us about your job description and what you did. Did either of you see combat?

CH: She was in a combat area, but I was not.

MH: Well, when we landed in Iwo Jima that first day it sounded like the biggest Fourth of July to me. There was still bombs and the ground was a little shaky, and a lot of confusion, dust and dirt blowing around. There wasn't any really paved area, even the patients were on the ground on litters, you know, with a canvas top. Then when we went over to Iwo Jima, I mean to Okinawa. It was a little better, but it was still noisy when we picked up patients there. But that was the extent of combat for us. I was [unclear]

WP: Why don't you tell us about some of the memorable characters you met and friends you made in the service. And did you keep in contact with after the war?

MH: Oh, definitely. We called ourselves the dirty dozen, which a lot of outfits did. But the twelve of us that trained, the first twelve, we really stuck together like glue and we didn't know anyone else and some of the other outfits were surrounding us at the time. And, over the years as somebody was married or had a baby we all sent notes and kept in touch to this day. Some have gone, but the majority still write and take care of one another at conventions and that sort of thing.

CH: You want funny stories or what? [Everyone laughs]

WP: Clean funny stories. [Laughs]

CH: One night when I was at Atlanta, Georgia, I was rooming with this fellow named C.D. House and my name is C.D. Hudnall and we called each other "CD" and we had two bunks in one room, together. One morning when it was just starting to get light he jumped out of bed and started yelling, and he said 'CD help me!' And, I felt like crawling down under my bed, but I didn't and I just waited there a little while and all of the sudden he quieted down. I said, 'what the heck happened to you?' He kind of laughed and he says, 'I woke up and I felt this arm and I thought it was somebody else's and it was my arm, which had gone to sleep' and he got all excited and that what that was all about. [Laughs]

WP: Do you keep track of some the guys you met and obviously your brother, but do you keep track of the guys you met?

CH: I've seen this fellow as recent as five or six years ago. We keep track of quite a few of them. Unfortunately, they are starting to die out.

WP: Now Mary, I know Steven Ambrose interviewed you previously for a documentary on the war. Which I saw and was interesting and you told the story of how you were chosen as a navy flight nurse and did that continue after September of 1945, were you still bringing people back and forth?

MH: Oh yes, we did that right up until... not from overseas, but in the country after they came back into Oakland and they would be sent to area hospitals for recuperation near their homes. That was all over the country. Some places, like I said, were long like San Juan, Trinidad, and Panama --

WP: You were taking them down there to recuperate?

MH: [Nods her head] Some of them.

WP: You both got to see the world. You grew up in Missouri and you in Malden. You got to places like Honolulu and Guam and Okinawa it must have been pretty --

CH: We didn't see the other side of the Atlantic like a lot of other people did.

WP: Do you remember some of your feelings or were you so busy that doing your job --

MH: No, we would have a couple of days in Honolulu before and after we brought patients into Honolulu from out in what they call the forward area and bring them back to Aiea Heights where they would be reevaluated to go back to the States. And some of the boys had to stay in Honolulu because they had to have further surgery. Then the rest we would take on to the States, but in those few days that we were there, fortunately one of the girls with our group had lived there before the war. So, she knew all the good places and the good places to go and eat. We went to different beaches on the far side of the island that we never would have seen ordinarily. And, gardens and flowers that flourished, it was just spectacular, beautiful. So it was a good take.

WP: How did you deal with the stress? You were obviously seeing wounded men and women, it must have been very stressful, even with your training. And, Clyde with the flying all the time and being away from home. How did you deal with that stress on a day-to-day level? Do you remember?

MH: Well, they made sure we had adequate sleeping time, which I think helped a great deal. Because anytime we took extra time to stay out late or anything like that you really felt it especially when you were doing so much flying. The flights were long; seven or eight hour flights, in those days. And our cabins were not pressurized so it was a little rougher. I think the sleep was the answer. I didn't hear anybody talking about stress or that sort of thing.

CH: Very little stress. I might add a little bit here. After I got though training in naval air transport in the states. I flew from Olathe, Kansas, to the West Coast. That was my regular run and I would make many trips. Some others had the Olathe to the East Coast; while I preferred the West Coast. Then after that we got out and while we were there, occasionally we'd get evacuation flights and we'd

have a lot of stretchers with casualties on board. We used to distribute them to El Paso, well San Diego, El Paso and Dallas and some times we'd bring them into Olathe and they'd go on farther east. After we got the Pacific she was on the flights that brought patients into Guam and then we would take the patients back to Honolulu and of course we also flew them into Oakland, California. We never got any of those flights. That was a prized flight. But on all these flights where we had patients on board, we had to have a flight nurse on board, so strangely enough I had quite a few flight nurses aboard my flights, but I never saw her when I was in the Pacific. Not until we got back to Naval Air Station in Patuxent River, which is 70 miles southeast of Washington D.C.

WP: Everybody in the service wanted your job Clyde --

CH: What?

WP: I said every guy in the service wanted your job.

CH: I wasn't dissatisfied [Everyone Laughs].

WP: No, I wouldn't think so. When writing home and all that, did you have any experience with the USO?

MH: No, I didn't have any experience with them.

WP: Did you write home and did you get your mail --

MH: Oh, you couldn't wait for that mail. That was a good lift for everybody. Packages would come in; I know my mother used to send us candied kisses from Charlie's, which was a noted place in Malden, and they'd be hard as rocks by the time I received them and the first time they came I just put them on the table. We came back about ten minutes later it was covered with ants. And the lady that worked doing chores in our hut was a native of Guam and she said 'Oh, no, no, no' she said 'Here's what you do. You take your coffee can and you put it in a basin of water and you put your kisses on top and they don't come across the water.' That was my first information about ants not swimming. [Laughs]

WP: What about some of the cultural minutia of the day, who were your favorite bands? Who were your favorite singers? Any one particular song that would strike a note with you when you were away from home? Was it Artie Shaw or Benny Goodman? Any particular favorites?

MH: Not really, if you'd hear something that you had heard previous you thought it was great. But we didn't have too much music out there and, of course, we didn't have any on the airplane, at that time. If we did hear something coming out especially in Honolulu, where you were more apt to hear something, it caught your ear and made you feel good. Perked you up a bit.

WP: Clyde did you have a --

CH: I had no favorites.

WP: Now Mary, you and I had spoken earlier about being a flight nurse and a lot of guys like Clyde flying around there. It must have put you under some unique situations being a young lady away from home and you were telling me one time about going out.

MH: Most were perfect gentlemen. We had, and I'm talking about all of our group, never one let anyone bother them in any manner, shape, or form. Or, even say thing that was off-color. If they did have a little off-color, saying it was usually towards the forward area of the plane and it wasn't for your ears anyway. I had never heard anybody complain.

WP: Did you get to go home at all during the war? Did you get leave to go home?

CH: I did when I was - [to Mary] Excuse me go ahead.

MH: Oh, yes, before I went to California, I had leave and then I had leave from Newport before I went to Chicago. And that was good and my brother was home and in uniform so we had time to go to Boston and go to a few night clubs before we both left. It was a great time.

CH: I did when I was in Olathe because I was only about forty miles from home and I had a car and I had a friend who gave me gasoline coupons [Everyone Laughs].

MH: That was important.

WP: Was there any particular ritual when you flew? You both flew a lot. Any particular ritual that you did for good luck, before you got on the plane, like a [Pauses] what's his name... Chuck...

CH: Yeager?

WP: Yeager used to have a stick of beam that he used to stick on the side of the plane or did you have any good luck charm that you carried with you during the war?

MH: No, I didn't, but my corpsmen, we always had one corpsmen with use and he always used to stick his gum on the outside of the plane. He used to say 'if it's there when we come back I'll be on it.' [Laughs]

WP: How about your Clyde?

CH: Not me, I'm not superstitious.

WP: Did you keep a journal of your experiences when you were in the service?

MH: Well we had a log book, you know, for your flight hours that more or less was our journal.

CH: That was the only journal we had. I never kept any other journal.

WP: Do you remember your serial numbers?

MH: Yes...

CH: 207349 [Everyone Laughs]. It's changed now. When, oh after World War II they adopted social security numbers. Any my brother was 207350, one up.

WP: What were your feelings when you separated from the service? Was it a relief; was it bittersweet? Were you just so happy just to get a chance to go home?

MH: Well, when I left the service I had to leave because if you married, in those days, and we had just been married in July, you could not stay in the navy nurse corps. And I had just received my orders to get my Masters at Columbia and I had to turn it down because once you got married you were out. Clyde had already left, the service, and was in Florida so I went to live in Florida. It was a little hard getting used because you were always so used to the other routine. It just seemed a little dull at first, you know, the days - to fill the days up - but then I did go to work, nights at the Saint Vincent's Hospital in Jacksonville and that filled up the time.³

CH: I just felt a little lost. It was a matter of getting acclimated. I can remember when we were in the service then we were not allowed to wear civilian clothes at all. And, of course, when I got out, I went out and bought myself a new suit. And the uniform that I was used to buttoned up to about here [Points to 2/3 up the chest] and the suit I got buttoned up to down here [Pointing to the navel] and I felt naked [Everyone Laughs]. That was the only bad thing that occurred just after I got out.

WP: At any time did you consider making the navy a career or when you were in the service did you say 'this is something I would consider doing for the rest of my life?'

MH: No, after I met Clyde I figured that was the end the navy career.

WP Did you carry on flying at all after the war?

CH: Oh yeah.

WP: You did.

³ The hospital is located two miles south of Downtown Jacksonville, on the west bank of the St. John's River.

CH: I instructed a little flight school in Jacksonville for awhile. Eventually we came up here... and I got into FAA and I flew for them. I flew Beechcraft and DC3s and I did that for twenty-eight years and I stayed in the navy reserves so I was still flying navy aircrafts. I might mention something that you asked for awhile ago. One time out in the Pacific, I was in Guam and I was scheduled for a flight to Manus, which is two degrees south of the equator; about a ten-hour flight I guess. We took off and we had reported bad weather, which was equatorial thunderstorms. And we took off at about ten o'clock in the evening. Our flight schedules are anywhere about the twenty-four hour clock. I was advised that we would get quite a bit of turbulence and thunderstorm activity and all. About an hour after we took off we were in it, and I've never seen it rain so hard and all night long we were just bouncing up and down [Moves hand up and down]. It wasn't like going up a 1,000 feet like in a thunder storm, but was it just constant, a lot of churning up and down. And of course, I'm wondering if we're ever going to get there. I also heard about the Japanese fouling up the navigation aids. What we had to find our terminal down there at Manus was a radio beacon, which we could only receive about two hours out at best, and this was about a ten-hour flight. We had a heading that was given to us on our flight plan, pre-computed time. As soon as we got into this stuff we had no means of navigation whatsoever; we couldn't see the stars and that is all we had to navigate by out there; in those days. And so I'm wondering how much we're going to drift off course. I flew that heading all night and the next morning what we estimated about two hours from our destination we started trying to tune the station. We started getting it and we had an instrument in the cockpit that if the station is dead ahead this needle points straight up. The needle pointed straight up. I couldn't believe it. I thought something was wrong, I really did. It couldn't happen. As far as I'm concerned, we could have been three or four hundred miles off course. Well, pretty soon the weather got a little better and we got where we could see things and we flew straight right into the runway. Normally on any flight, the navigator will reveal different headings now and then. And we flew one. [Everyone Laughs] I thought that was amazing.

WP: It's been over fifty years since you folks served in war. What do you feel now about your contribution to winning, literally a world war? Everybody in the world was involved in that war. So what do you feel now, you must think about it, occasionally, that you contributed to this huge effort?

MH: Well at the time, we thought it was the proper thing to do and at the end of it, we figured we'd have peace, everywhere. But looking at the world's situation today it doesn't look like there's very much peace no mater where you look around the globe. And that makes you feel a little dumb.

WP: Any thoughts Clyde?

CH: Well, I was never in battle, which suited me. I never got any medal ribbons and all that stuff. But I feel like I did my assigned task so I did my proper contributions. I feel, really, that I helped in the overall project. My job was fairly just logistics, but without logistics you're dead.

WP: Now I know you are both married and this is a little bit of a unique situation we're interviewing a couple here. I know you were both married while you were in the service. So what was that like? I've heard the story before and I thought it was interesting how you met, you mentioned to me that you didn't meet up with her.

MH: We were stationed at Patuxent River, Maryland as Clyde mentioned before and one Sunday, which was always a relaxing day on the base. We were fifty-five miles from Washington [Looks over at Clyde, he nods] and to go into Washington from the base you had to get permission from your supervisor. Well we had gone over to breakfast and Clyde and his buddies were over there for breakfast and after breakfast Clyde asked if I'd like to go into Washington to see Mount Vernon. Well, I had never seen Mount Vernon so I thought that would be a good idea. So my head nurse said "all right, go." So that was our first date. [Looks over to Clyde]

CH: With two other guys along.

MH: Oh yes, I forgot. [Everyone laughs] Chaperones.

WP: Obviously something clicked that day.

CH: But, she knew the other guys.

MH: Yeah, I knew them. One of them I had flown with before.

WP: Now was that the first time you had met that day?

MH: Yes, yes, yes.

CH: As I said before, we were both out in the Pacific, but she is probably one of the only flight nurses I didn't see out there.

MH: We went to a convention of flight nurses in San Diego and all the flight nurses knew Clyde, they didn't even say hi to me. They were talking with Clyde.

WP: So you were married in --

MH: Patuxent River in the navy chapel on the base.

WP: In 1946, was it?

MH: Forth-seven.

CH: A little history on that. That base was developed in the early part of the war and it was farmland and there were farmhouses around. They tore all the buildings down except one, which was a little church. And it is now and was then, the base chapel and that is where we got married.

WP: So that base is still in existence?

MH: Yes.

CH: That is where the navy does all their flight test stuff and the army does it out in... what's their big flight test base?

WP: Edwards.

CH: Edwards, yeah.

WP: What else about your experience during that war so long ago would you like to share with us? That you'd like to share with the people watching this film in the future.

MH: Well, because we were able to evacuate the boys wounded from Iwo Jima and Okinawa, our group was given a unit citation and it was presented to us at Admiral Nimitz's headquarters. We were invited up there to dinner and it was a very nice occasion and Admiral Nimitz was a most charming gentlemen that you ever wanted to meet, he was very nice.⁴

WP: What was the official name of your group? Name and number of your group?

MH: We were air evacuation nurses and we, as Clyde said, we were with NATC. Also when we were first out there we were under VRE, which was another evacuation group.

CH: Our group was VR-11. She really belonged to the VR-11 but she was part of a detachment, which was called VRE-1. They had another detachment one in Samar in the Philippines. And another one down... I've forgotten where it was... on the southern end of the Philippine chain. Oh, it was Manus, the place I mentioned a while ago.

WP: Anything else you can think of that you want to record for posterity?

MH: I can't think of anything.

WP: When did you move to Peabody?

MD: 1957.

WP: [off camera] Maria, did you have any questions that came to mind?

⁴ Admiral Chester W. Nimitz (1885 - 1966). He and General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964) were the leading military men during World War II in the Pacific Theatre. Admiral Nimitz was a naval fleet admiral. During World War II he was Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet (CinCPac), for U.S. naval forces and Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas (CinCPOA), for U.S. and Allied air, land, and sea forces during World War II.

MV: No, I think you've asked everything I'm thinking of.
Those were very good questions.

MH: Probably lead you to think of something.

WP: Close up, there is still more filming we can do. Well,
I'll do a fade out here.

WP: Well thank you so much.

MH: You're welcome.

